



Natural Resources
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News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEW CONSERVATION SECURITY PROGRAM REWARDS RANCHERS

RENO, Dec. 29 — Ranchers and farmers in three Nevada watersheds and a portion of a fourth are eligible to participate in a new program designed to reward them for their long-term stewardship.

"The Lower Walker River, Lower Carson Desert, Pine Creek and Warner Lakes Watersheds were selected as part of the 2005 Conservation Security Program," said Peggy Hughes, assistant state conservationist for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in Nevada. "CSP is a voluntary program that financially rewards land managers who are actively conserving natural resources," she said.

Producers with the majority of their land inside the watershed will be eligible to sign-up for the program in early 2005. Participants will be enrolled in one of three tiers in the program, depending on the extent of the conservation treatment in place on their farm or ranch. Payments will be based in part on this existing conservation treatment as well as their willingness to undertake additional environmental enhancements. "These payments for demonstrable long-term stewardship will reward many of those who undertook conservation on their own initiative and who care for the resources we all share," Hughes said.

Hughes added that while protecting soil and water quality are the "price of admission," farmers will also have options to improve wildlife habitat, undertake on-farm energy conservation, improve air quality, participate in environmental monitoring, participate in watershed-wide stewardship programs, improve nutrient and pest management activities.

Producers interested in participating in CSP need to complete a self-assessment prior to signing up for the program. The initial self-assessment will help producers identify whether their individual agricultural operation meets sign-up criteria and answer the question, "Have I fully addressed the minimum requirements for both soil quality and water quality on the land I manage?" By going through the workbook, producers will get an idea if they are eligible for CSP at this time. The NRCS Nevada

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